

The Desire To Be First (Mark 9:33-37)

Proposition: We can all quench our thirst for exaltation by following the instructions Jesus corrects His disciples with.

- I. Be Aware of our Exaltation (Vs. 34c)
 - A. Our Apt of Exaltation (Vs. 34c)
 - B. Our Arrogance in Exaltation (Vs. 34c)
- II. Be Assured of our Examination (Vs. 33)
 - A. A Close Examination (Vs. 34)
 - B. A Questioning examination (Vs. 33c)
- III. Be Advised of His Explanation (Vs. 35)
 - A. The Paradox of His Explanation (Vs. 35b-d)
 - B. The Precision of His Explanation (Vs. 35b-d)
- IV. Be Attentive to His Example (Vs. 36-37)
 - A. The Humility of His Example (Vs. 36)
 - B. The Heart of His Example (Vs. 37)

The Desire To Be First (MK9:33-37)

With all the bowl games going on now you will almost assuredly see the scene play about to tell you all out. During a time out the camera will pan over into the stands to a group of rowdy college kids who will crawl over each other to get as close to the camera as say "We're #1". They may be ranked #3 in the nation, but they are #1. I remember my college coach saying, if you're a pitch digger, be the best, and slick make, best I guess there's a little of that in all us. But it is a wide open highway to pride and self exaltation. In the life of a believer God is #1 not me. So how do we fulfill this God

I. Be Aware of Our Exaltation - One must wonder where this conversation had its origin. Maybe it was from Peter Jones, From Experience but it does show us that

A. Our Apt of Exaltation - Just like the college kid pointing #1 we all have a little of that in us. We are not except from it because we are followers of Christ. These disciple were with in arms reach away from Jesus and were full of themselves. Where does it come from? Where is its origin. Could it be in Gen 3:5 the lie of Satan to

be like God. Where ever it came from we all have it.

B. Our Arrogence in Exaltation - Jesus in the previous verses had explained that he was going to Jerusalem to die, and there they are disputing about the exaltation positions. One author wrote: 'There is something heart-breaking in the thought of Jesus going towards a cross and his disciples ~~assuming~~ about who would be greatest. From 17:19; 35:6-7 also chs 14:13 Lucifer was cast out of heaven for self exalting words. What a roga

II. Be Assured of Our Examination

The disciples seemed to assume their arrogant conversation went unnoticed, but it wasn't long until their words ^{were called into} ~~were called into~~

A. A Close Examination - The omniscient Lord Jesus heard every word of their vindictiveness. That's the whole reason this subject was brought up. Jesus knew of their self exalting hearts. One of the ~~most~~ ³ frightening ~~frightening~~ verses in the Bible is Matt 15:36. Let us never forget the little children's song oh be careful little lips what you say... Our conversations are never private, there is always a close.

B. A Questioning Examination - Jesus asked not to gain knowledge but to bring confession. Their conversation was brought to light by Jesus' questions.

- 1) ...this God given desire of excellence without falling into the sinful pitfalls that so often accompany those desires? Well here in out text Jesus teaches his disciples who are caught up in such a deceitful sin. I believe that we can all quench our thirst for exaltation by following the instructions Jesus corrects His disciples with.
- 2) ...that they are so mush like you and I.
- 3) **Proverbs 17:19** He loveth transgression that loveth strife: and he that exalteth his gate seeketh destruction. **Proverbs 25:6-7** Put not forth thyself in the presence of the king, and stand not in the place of great men: For better it is that it be said unto thee, Come up hither; than that thou shouldest be put lower in the presence of the prince whom thine eyes have seen. **Isaiah 14:13-14** For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.
- 4) **Matthew 12:36** But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.
- 5) ...close examination. How different would our lives be if we were to stop and ask "Could I go and do this if Jesus were watching me? Could I go on saying the things I'm saying, if Jesus were hearing?" Practicing the presence of Jesus would radically change our lives.

1) ...made a real contribution to life are the men who said to themselves, not, "How can I use the state and society to further my own prestige and my own personal ambitions?" but, "How can I use my personal gifts and talents to serve the state?"

Their response was silence. They knew well their conversation was wrong. These disciples being called into account is a stern warning to us, and the ease with which so quickly ^{and} they are another down at the same time raise our selves with our tongue.

III Be Advised by His Explanation

We talk this matter so lightly in our lines but Jesus' response to their silence was very serious. He took an official teaching position.

A. The Paradox of His Explanation

Jesus' explanation is a bit of a paradox. A paradox is a statement that seems to contradict itself. Jesus said you won't be #1 then you must become least.

If you want to be great then you must be the least. Jesus substitutes authority for servitude. You are not the great by being master, but servant. This concept goes against our flesh and reasoning but

The Precision of His Explanation

But how true Jesus is concerning real greatness. Barclay: 'The really great men, the men remembered as having made a

Jesus Christ the highest and most exalted in the universe humbled himself from the heights of heaven to be so low as to wash the feet of sinful men. Matthew Henry said "These whose

most humble and simple do most resemble Christ

IV. Be Attentive to His Example -

Illustrate how this servant greatness attracts the heart of God, Jesus brings a child into their midst to illustrate

A. The Humility of His Example -

The unspecial child is an example of submission & humility (Wiersbe). The child has nothing to exalt himself about. He can't care for himself, he can't meet his own needs. The world around us says you are great if people work for you. Jesus says greatness comes from serving others. This attempt to please parents. And the parents exalt the child with love and affection. ^{Child = Servant} _{in name}

B. The Heart of His Example -

Greatness doesn't come from receiving or serving a king. It comes from receiving and serving the least, the weak, the helpless of all, the child.

The greatest of all the servants of God are those that seek out to serve those that are the least in the world. When we do this we become great in the sight of both the Lord Jesus ^{Father} and our heavenly

VI. Close: Do you want to truly be great? Then you must become least. Remember God's measure of greatness is not that of the world's. What about your words

1) ...resemble Christ, and shall be the most tenderly owned by
Him."